



Embargoed: 0700hrs 18 July 2011

Rockhopper Exploration plc

("Rockhopper" or the "Company")

14/10-6 Appraisal Well Spud

Rockhopper Exploration plc (AIM: RKH), the North Falkland Basin oil and gas exploration company, announces that the 14/10-6 appraisal well ("the Well") was spudded at 2125 hrs BST on 15 July 2011. The Well is situated on Licence PL032, which is 100% owned and operated by Rockhopper, and is the third appraisal well to be drilled on the Sea Lion feature since Rockhopper's oil discovery in May 2010.

The Well is located some 4.1km to the west of the 14/10-2 discovery well, on the western side of the structural low at top reservoir, and 2.3km to the south-west and 14m updip from the 14/10-4 appraisal well. The Well is designed to investigate reservoir and hydrocarbon presence outside what the Company considers the minimum case area. Both Sea Lion Main and Lower fan intervals are targets, with all the Sea Lion Main fan expected to be above the Oil-Water Contact established by the 14/10-4 appraisal well, and with reservoir expected to be thinner than encountered in previous wells on the Sea Lion feature.

Drilling operations are expected to take approximately 38 days and a further announcement will be made once drilling is completed.

Enquiries:

Rockhopper Exploration plc
Sam Moody – Chief Executive
Tel. +44 (0)20 7920 2340 (via M: Communications)

M: Communications
Patrick d'Ancona or Ben Simons
Tel. +44 (0)20 7920 2340

Canaccord Genuity Limited
Charles Berkeley / Henry Fitzgerald-O'Connor
Tel. +44 (0) 20 7050 6500

Notes to Editors

Rockhopper was established in February 2004 with a strategy to invest in and carry out an offshore oil exploration programme to the north of the Falkland Islands. The Company floated on AIM in August 2005 and holds a 100 per cent. interest in four offshore production licences: PL023, PL024, PL032 and PL033 which cover approximately 3,800 sq. km. Rockhopper has also farmed in (7.5% working interest) to licences PL003 and PL004, which are operated by Desire Petroleum. These licences have been granted by the Falkland Islands government.

An extensive work programme has been carried out over a number of years on the licences operated by Rockhopper. This has included 2D and 3D Seismic and Controlled Source Electromagnetic Mapping (CSEM). In February 2010, the Ocean Guardian drilling rig arrived in Falkland waters to carry out a multi-well drilling campaign. Rockhopper drilled an exploration well on its Sea Lion prospect during April and May 2010, the result of which was the first oil discovery and Contingent Oil Resource in the North Falkland Basin. The Sea Lion discovery was successfully tested during September 2010 and June 2011 and was the first oil to flow to surface in Falkland Islands waters. Rockhopper has contracted seismic vessels MV Polarcus Asima and Nadia to carry out a 3D seismic survey, beginning December 2010, over areas of licences PL024, PL032 and PL033 which were not previously defined by 3D, as well as adjacent areas.

Rockhopper is currently carrying out further drilling on Licence PL032.

Rockhopper Exploration plc www.rockhopperexploration.co.uk